

Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Council Meeting
Jessie Parker Building, Starkweather Room
December 17, 2009, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Members Present: Preston Daniels, Chair, Department of Human Rights (DHR)
Kathy Stone, Department of Public Health (DPH)
Richard Moore, Director, Child Advocacy Board
Becky Swift, ODCP (for Gary Kendall)
Cyndy Erickson, DE (for Judy Jeffrey)
Mary Nelson, DHS (for Charles Krogmeier)
Diane Oak Goode, IWD (for Elisabeth Buck)

Members Absent: Chuck Morris, ISU Extension, 4-H Youth Development
Adam Lounsbury, Iowa Commission on Volunteer Services (ICVS)
Shanell Wagler, Director Office of Empowerment

Steering Committee Members/State Agency Workgroup Members Present:
Steve Michael, DHR, CJJP
Paul Stageburg, Administrator, DHR/CJJP
Carol Behrer, Youth Policy Institute of Iowa
Annelise Plooster, DHR, SIYAC Coordinator
Jeff Grimes, AMOS
Amy Daniels, DHR, Youth Development Project Coordinator
Mike Williams, DHR/PWD
Julie Hibben, IDPH
Ruth Allison, IVRS
Steve Havemann, I-JAG

Steering Committee Members/State Agency Workgroup Members Absent:
Jason Allen, IWD
Eric Sage, CJJP
Dave Kuker, CJJP

Visitors: Jesse Marfal, Dhrooti Vyas, Genesis Rivera (SIYAC Representatives)
Xiaoping Wang, DE

Minutes were taken by Dottie Schiltz, Recording Secretary.

Introductions, Objectives, Review of Agenda

1. Daniels welcomed attendees and outlined the agenda. With quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. Agenda objectives included:
- SIYAC Report from Life After Graduation Committee
- State Strategies to Achieve Graduation for All through Review Data by Xiaoping Wang, DE
- Workgroup Recommendations
- Finalize Goals and Objectives and identify next steps
- Provide guidance to staff on format and structure of Annual Report.

Motion to approve agenda was made by Moore, seconded by Nelson. Upon vote, motion passed. M/C

Approval of Minutes

2. Daniels asked everyone to review the minutes of November 24 meeting. He called for edits, or discussion. Edits/corrections noted include:
1) Changing spelling in paragraph 3, line 5, reference four teams, change "Team Nutrition" to read, "Teen Nutrition"
2) Spring conference adding "Elevate" as hosting sponsor along with IJAG, JEL, and SIYAC for conference mentioned on page 2, top paragraph, line 11.
3) Correct attendee listed as Mary Sheka to read Mary Nelson.

Motion by Moore to approve minutes with additions and corrections noted made. Seconded by Diane Oak Goode. Upon vote, motion passed.

State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC)

3. Annelise Plooster introduced visiting SIYAC committee members for “Life after Graduation”. Committee member not present was Sean Ryan. SIYAC members represented West Des Moines Valley and North High Schools. Jessa Marfal reported on the information their committee had gathered before the meeting. SIYAC had compiled data on the statewide graduation rate and reported it as 89% overall. However, Des Moines and North reported 65% and 49% respectively. After much discussion within their committee on the results of the graduation rate in Des Moines and Iowa in general, this **SIYAC committee voted to take the stand that the compulsory age be raised from 16 to 17**. The reasoning was that 16-year-olds do not have proper education or tools to go forward without their education. They voiced their concern that 16-year-olds are not adults, and as children are not able to be self-sufficient or support themselves.

They would like to ask ICYD to see what they can do to get this accomplished or what steps they can take initiate the change. Data received from IJAG. Query posed as to whether data provided race/ethnicity breakdown, which was not available by district but statewide.

Daniels asked committee why they think the rate is the way it is. In response, committee would determine some students have jobs and have to support family members. Large minority population areas and lot of parents are immigrants, all working to support everyone, so have need to drop out to work. Some of the students are unable to fit into the structured environment. And become disengaged from the normal routine. Committee was asked if a one-year increase would make the difference. Making it 17 would get them to stay longer until they were seniors and hopefully encourage them to stay to graduate.

Erickson asked if change happened there would need to be other supports in place in addition to what is happening or would others need to be considered for those students to be successful in school. Consideration was made for students interested in staying, but having to attend alternative school to attain their graduation status. Daniels then asked if this rate reflects the drop out rate, or if it is a non-graduate rate for those who have gone through and did not graduate due to insufficient credits. Response indicated that could be both situations. Some make effort to get the credits some don't. Group was stunned and overwhelmed with data.

Erickson offered to contact the Department of Education study group that was recently formed to look at the issue of raising the compulsory age and at what supports would be needed if it was. Legislative supported effort requires report due in February. The study was prompted as a result of the Governor's support to that concern last year. Pros and Cons were cited both ways, so the group is looking at the impact it has had in other states, and whether it has contributed to the graduation rate or not. Without the additional supports, concern was noted that there would be little impact if any noticed. SIYAC involvement with that study would be helpful to both parties. Erickson will provide the connection for the SIYAC work group. The Work Study recommendations will definitely be in line with what they are asking. Erickson noted that although she was not sure what stage the workgroup was in; she believed the group would be able to build around the priority area which student leadership has recognized.

Daniels queried SIYAC committee on why they elected 17, not 18, for the compulsory age. Group believed that at 18-year old expresses more individuality, recognizing other freedoms that go with being 18. In definition, age-to-grade level, a typical junior would be 17 and turn 18 in their senior year. Plooster noted the graduation rate was probably affected by the IJAG program implemented at North High School. Several agreed it would be hard for ICYD to vote to agree, because we do not know what the study is going to say. Hope is expressed that SIYAC would have opportunity to meet with the group. Recognize the need for information and statistics what 16-year-olds' lives would be like if they do not graduate. Request by Michael to have DE study group provide copy of their draft report as important piece of information. When looking at the data, the numbers are extremely low.

In their determination for an objective, the SIYAC committee was asked why family values or school systems were not targeted as part of problem. Obvious reasons that parents do not feel it necessary to go to school because they need to work to help support the family. In some school systems, alternative schooling is considered. If group is looking at what the systems could do, and with that statement it really isn't the system problem. Structure doesn't really work for some, and if they make more money than going to school, money means more to family. DE working group is lead by Susan Walkup, who works with At-Risk Programs (Modified Allowable Growth Program) for students. DE-study funded by legislature with report due by end of January or first part of February. Money was provided to do the study (\$110,000). Contracted with RISE with IS to facilitate the focus groups that happened all over the state. Discussion rallied around the possibilities of the SIYAC work group working with the study group. Alternative suggestion is that some people do not feel that they fit in.

Also, the general Iowa population looks down at people who didn't graduation the conventional way. Makes students consider themselves not successful. Consensus that ICYD wasn't necessarily endorsing the 17-year old suggestion but rather supporting recommendations they have to submit. Continued discussion encircled reasons for increasing the compulsory rate and whether the increase would make difference. Further discussion pondered why existing graduation percentages are so low.

State Strategies to Achieve Graduation for All (Discussion led by Workgroup)

4. Workgroup discussion:

- a. Review Data was presented by Xiaoping Wang, DE, about Drop out and graduation rates.
 1. Students may complete in longer time than four years, but they will not be counted in graduation rate. As the expert in DE of drop out and graduations, she explained what the definitions are and what data surrounding those two issues throughout Iowa are. Data was provided in the packet. Handout provides definitions. Some of the larger percentages may be include GED graduates. Other regular diploma (modified diploma as approved by local school boards, with IEP, may also be included.
 2. Discussion regarding definition and accountability of GED students took place. Rate did change when school boards worked out agreement with community college. Still do not have link to regular colleges yet. Daniels by reflecting what group has narrowed the diploma spectrum, he noted:
 - a. those who graduate with regular diploma,
 - b. those who have alternative school to get modified, most often use modified diploma as IEP special education students, and
 - c. if regular education students go to alternative school. Question whether GED's ever count anywhere for success? Result not in data, not to employers, in prison looks good, at community colleges. Wonder at any given time what is number in alternative schools.
 3. Looking at data, what is striking is lack of change over the last ten years, is depressing that all the efforts, have provided no impact. **The number of minority students has increased ten percent over the past ten years.**
- b. Lengthy discussion ensued and covered areas concerning graduation rates, drop out rates, enrollment counts, how to determine how many students it takes to create a change of even 1%, and age limitations for receipt of diploma.
- c. Data provided, which was specific to Iowa, was reviewed at length. Considerations for age limitations vary from special education to regular education students. The group posed the question of what the impact of having a high school diploma has on life's outcomes.
- d. Further discussion on how to meet the needs of the students in the best way to reach the most students in regards to graduation developed. Relationships developed between students and school staff create a positive environment, alternative school provides a more workable/study setting which in turn provides a positive environment for students, and class schedule flexibility/non-flexibility may create reason for not attaining required credits, were areas related as pro and cons that exist towards graduation. Daniels expressed appreciation to group for work and effort in presenting the information. He requested Erickson and group to provided GED/census data as determined to be supportive of what Lounsbury noted.

5. Workgroup Recommendations:

Recommendations were provided on the Green Sheet handout, which included Council recommended goals and proposed format for the ICYD annual report. Discussion then focused on what goal they wanted to focus on and what different strategies they wanted to take to achieve that goal.

Two goals presented are:

- 1) By 2020 Iowa will increase the graduation rate to 95%. If cohort enrollment remains at approximately 39,000 that would equal approximately 2,000 additional graduates
- 2) By 2015, Iowa will decrease the number of annual dropouts by 25% or 1,100 youth.

Differences on the two goals presented were shared. Several members commented with their opinions and questions. Stone questioned SIYAC on their thoughts. Response noted if proposal number one was main goal, it would encompass number two as a result. Erickson agreed that graduation rate is what people can associate with. Swift suggested specifying the goal to increase from xx% to 95% to show the rate difference. The

consensus agreed that whatever works best for all departmental areas represented to help people be successful in life, that number one would work with the year to coincide with the DE year yet to be determined.

Daniels asked for action on Council Goals: Motion by Erickson to include Proposal One, which reads **“By 2020 Iowa will increase the graduation rate from 89% to 95%”**, with the understanding of how we are defining the graduation rate and modifying the year upon what DE decides and further move that Goal 2, which reads, “By 2015, Iowa will decrease the number of annual dropouts by 25%, or 1,100”, be included as an additional measure along with consideration to include the GED and high school equivalency as other forms of education certification. Seconded by Swift. Motion Carried.

6. Provide Guidance to Staff on Format and Structure of Annual Report

After clarification that concerns Lounsbury was looking for in respect to all students needs, were covered; i.e., if section 3b includes that, Moore moved to approve format as submitted (See attach green sheet), seconded by Kathy Stone. Upon vote, motion passed. Daniels appointed Behrer, Erickson, Michael, Allison, and Grimes to prepare document for review and appointed Jeffrey, Buck, and Moore to be final reviewers.

7. **Other Business**

None

8. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2009, 2:00-4:00 p.m., at the Jessie Parker Building Starkweather Room.

Adjourned at 4:10

Dottie Schiltz, Recording Secretary